

What is claimed is:

1. A method of managing workflow in a commercial printing environment including a designer location and a print service provider location, said method comprising:
  - establishing a closed-loop communication link between the designer location and the print service provider location;
  - creating a press ready file at the designer location using updated device configuration information received from the print service provider location via said closed-loop communication link;
  - submitting said press ready file to the print service provider location via said closed-loop communication link; and
  - receiving a printed output of said press ready file and shipping said printed output using an automated shipping device.
2. A method of managing workflow according to claim 1, wherein said automated shipping device is a Design to Ship enabled device and forms part of said closed-loop communication link.
3. A method of managing workflow according to claim 2, wherein said automated shipping device is assigned a unique identifier.
4. A method of managing workflow according to claim 2, wherein after said step of submitting, said method further comprises a step of verifying, at said print service provider location, that said press ready file will be produced at said print service provider location as designed at the designer location and, if not, correcting said press ready file to ensure production substantially as designed.
5. A program product for managing workflow in a commercial printing environment including a designer location and a print service provider location, said product comprising machine-readable program code for causing, when executed, a machine to perform the following method steps:

establishing a closed-loop communication link between the designer location and the print service provider location;  
creating a press ready file at the designer location using updated device configuration information received from the print service provider location via said closed-loop communication link;  
submitting said press ready file to the print service provider location via said closed-loop communication link; and  
receiving a printed output of said press ready file and shipping said printed output using an automated shipping device.

6. A program product according to claim 5, wherein said automated shipping device is a Design to Ship enabled device and forms part of said closed-loop communication link.

7. A program product according to claim 6, wherein said automated shipping device is assigned a unique identifier.

8. A program product according to claim 6, wherein after said step of submitting, said method further comprises a step of verifying, at said print service provider location, that said press ready file will be produced at said print service provider location as designed at the designer location and, if not, correcting said press ready file to ensure production substantially as designed.

9. A system for managing workflow in a commercial printing environment including a designer location and a print service provider location, said system comprising:

means for establishing a closed-loop communication link between the designer location and the print service provider location;  
means for creating a press ready file at the designer location using updated device configuration information received from the print service provider location via said closed-loop communication link;

means for submitting said press ready file to the print service provider location via said closed-loop communication link; and means for receiving a printed output of said press ready file and shipping said printed output using an automated shipping device.

10. An automated shipping device for use with a design-to-press workflow in a commercial printing environment including a designer location, a print service provider location and a closed-loop communication link between them, said automated shipping device comprising:

a memory for storing device information; and  
a communication module for connecting to said closed-loop communication link to communicate device information with the designer location and the print service provider location.